GOING WRONG and GETTING RIGHT . .

By ROBERT H. MOULTON

SUPERINTENDENT LYON INTERVIEWING AN APPLICANT

MILITARY PRISONER WHO MADE GOOD

YOUNG CONVICT STARTED ON ROAD TO BUSINESS SUCCESS

HE glanced up from his ledger and caught the invitation of the treasurer's index finger. Once before that same signal had meant a raise of $25 a month—or, as he and his wife had put it, a balance in a savings bank.

He laid down his pen and walked into the treasurer's office with an expression as nearly radiant as his inscrutably set face ever wore.

When he came out, a change had come over him. His face was pallid and his lips were set. Yet he again had been offered a raise—not merely $300 a year more, but double the salary he had been getting. And instantly he had refused it. There never was a man more dumbfounded than the treasurer by that refusal. The tender of his own position, which he was soon to resign, had been curtly refused. And as though it had been notice of discharge, the man whom he had promoted to the confidential set of books had served notice that he would leave within the week. "Time to quit," the man muttered to himself as he finished his posting, put the books away in the private office and prepared to go home.

Once before, as he vividly recalled, it had become time for him to make a sudden, iron resolution to quit. When the last bar had yielded to his saw he had heard the turnkey in the corridor and abruptly he threw himself upon his bed. "Here's a paper," the turnkey had said, and went on. The prison was just waking up; summer dawn was creeping through the grated windows. He left the bunk and took the paper to the light. Soon his eye caught the dispatch from Albany that announced that the New York legislature had passed the habitual criminal act. He shuddered slightly and glanced toward the nearly severed bars, knowing that if he escaped and was rearrested he would be likely never to walk the streets again a free man. It would be "life" for him. He would spend the rest of his young life like a fly in a bottle. "Time to quit," he had muttered.

Better discipline at home when he was a boy would have kept him out of trouble, but he was sent up to the reform school from Cincinnati. It was only a short term, but when he went back home he was branded as a discharged prisoner of the state, one of the fraternity against which most police officers feel that they are pitted in implacable strife. When he followed his determination to be decent and get work, the first man had said: "Come around a little later." It was not only the reply, but the quizzical smile that accompanied it which had made him feel the gall and wormwood which most discharged prisoners must swallow, if unaided, a potion which turns many of them to the underworld, in desperation. He had not done so heinous a thing that mankind should shun him as a loathsome, dangerous, hunted thing. He was "broke" and hungry, but he went on hunting for a job until another man turned him down cold and added some stinging words about convicts.

That is what goaded him, as it goads others, into following a desperate game, when he met a young fellow who also had served a bit in the reform school.

They went in deep and the next sentence was to Columbus. That gave him a post-graduate course in the ways of the underworld, the tricks of the cleverest of the confidence men and burglars. With the ruses and wiles of crime an open book, his active mind soon set him to contriving burglaries as the leader of a gang, and the disposing of the loot. He never tasted liquor and was equal to any emergency. Crime became an absorbing business with him, outlawed business filled with the ever-present dread of capture. He saved money, but all that he had saved went in the effort to save himself when he landed in a burly officer's arms. He was sent to the penitentiary in Kansas and there he "did time," endured the grinding monotony of prison life and prison fare, as a prisoner.

It was certain that all that buried past would be revealed if he applied for fidelity bond, as would be necessary, if he accepted the position of treasurer that had been offered to him. It was that which made him decide in a flash that he could not be treasurer.

That night he did not go directly home. He telegraphed to Superintendent Lyon of the Central Howard association in Chicago, using a name he never before had used in that town—his own. The association had found him the job as bookkeeper when he was about to be discharged from the Kansas prison. In that case he had applied without expecting anything but advice, but he discovered when his case was taken up that its affiliations and its system could help a convict when he needed it most. A day or two later he received a reply, crisp in its instruction to report at once for another position.

He got the new job, began again, and in six years he was receiving $1,800 a year. Then he received an offer from another company which accepted his record in the two recent positions without questioning his past. He made good, and is now drawing $4,000 a year as sales manager. He has nothing now to fear from the police for he is a new man, his alertness, his decisiveness turned to new use.

In the fifteen years of its existence the Central Howard association has assisted 12,557 men, just emerged from prison, to begin life over again, acting as the mediator between the prisoner and the rebuffs of "outrageous fortune." Most of them secured employment with broad-minded business men who were willing to give the man an opportunity.

Eighty per cent of all the men who have come to the association during the fifteen years of its activity have made good, and thousands of them are now established as useful citizens throughout the country. By their own unaided efforts they could scarcely have won, since they came in most cases without money, experience or adequate initiative.

In 1914 the association assisted 2,200 men at an average cost of $5.49. Of this number, 147 were paroled to the superintendent, and the earnings of these men for themselves, as given upon the association's records, of monthly reports, amounted to $58,441.

The estimated earnings, upon the same basis, of the 2,200 discharged men brings a total of approximately $880,000. Add to this amount of earnings the $330,000 that it might otherwise have cost society to keep these men in prison, and we have a net gain of 90 times the cost to the public of maintaining the Central Howard association.

The nation-wide responsibility of the association for the proper care of the ex-prisoner is shown by its records indicating the nativity of each applicant. From fourteen countries came some 350 prisoners, for whom as a foster country we have assumed the obligation of freedom and justice. Every state in the Union furnished one or more of these men who applied to the association for aid. Inasmuch as not more than one-fourth of these men belonged to any one state, either by reason of nativity or incarceration, it is apparent that the problem of caring for them is interstate and national. No state can assume its obligation alone, since other states are necessarily already caring for some of its delinquent citizens.

The important thing for these men, and for any community into which they happen to come, is not what they have been, but what they will become if given an opportunity. The question as to where they were born, and why, when and where they were imprisoned, fades in the face of the pressing need for work and a chance to prove their worth. This need the Central Howard association is seeking to supply. The fruit of its endeavors is shown not only in the number of men it has encouraged, advised and aided in a material way, but in the continued and rapid changes taking place in public sentiment toward the offender and in the new freedom given to those in bondage everywhere.

One of the finest tributes ever paid the Central Howard association is contained in the following which came unsolicited from a discharged prisoner whom the association had once befriended:

"A little more than a year ago I was discharged from a prison in New York state, where I had just finished serving a term for highway robbery committed in New York city. There I was born and there I had for a number of years pursued a criminal career.

"Before obtaining my freedom I had resolved to reform, to get work, and lead an honest life.

"My best efforts to get a job of any sort were unsuccessful, so about a month later I left New York, with five dollars in my pocket and an unbroken resolution to stick to living on the 'square.'

"Last October I arrived in Chicago on a Wabash box car—ragged and friendless—after a zigzag chase of that will-o'-the-wisp, a job, covering over two thousand miles. In a couple of days the few dimes I had were gone for food and lodging. So that I presently found myself homeless, jobless and broke.

"In casting about for means of obtaining the material with which to write East in an endeavor to get some money, I decided to ask a prison association to oblige me in this regard.

A search of the city directory yielded the address of the Salvation Army Prison bureau. Going there I told the officer in charge that I was an ex-convict and would appreciate the favor of writing materials, etc. He said that there were no facilities there for writing. That I would perhaps find better accommodations at the Central Howard association. He very courteously invited me to return to his office if I met with failure there.

"On the twelfth floor of a large office building in the heart of Chicago I found the Central Howard association.

"It was my lucky day—in that small suite of offices I was to find more than I consciously sought or from my previous experience had been led to hope for.

"On explaining my errand briefly, a littered table was cleared for me. Pen, ink and paper provided; no questions asked, and I proceeded to write for two hours. When I finished and prepared to leave I was called into a small private office. 'You are a stranger here? Looking for a job? Have you a place to sleep tonight, to eat?' The men who asked these questions gave me money for my supper, lodging and breakfast, and told me to come there in the morning. That he would then send me to some places where I might get work.

"I left there that late afternoon with a heart beating high with hope, with a new grip on my resolve to stay straight.

"No word had been spoken of reform, no mention of religion made, no machine-made charity doled out, no maudlin pretense there, but instead the square dealing of practical help and understanding.

"The next morning I was given several cards and directions. Each card bore an application for work addressed to an employer specifying the job sought and my name. Each bore the signed recommendation of F. Emory Lyon, superintendent of the Central Howard association.

"The European war was on, business unusually depressed, and jobs more than scarce. Every day I went there for these cards until I finally secured a job. Every day for two weeks I found the same unfailing willingness to help me get work. Every night I was given money for food and lodging. Every day many others were receiving the same help and encouragement.

"Chicago may well be proud of the work of this prison association; of the work of Doctor Lyon and his assistants. The reform of a criminal is generally considered a rather hopeless proposition, both by the public and by the criminal himself, and with good reason. That good reason is that the spirit and efficiency of the Central Howard association is rare indeed."

DEATH NECESSARY TO LIFE

For the Maintenance of the Latter the Former Is Declared to Be Indispensable.

Paradoxical as it may seem, death is necessary to sustain life. The complete dissolution and destruction of every living thing, both animal and vegetable, is required to produce and maintain life. If it were not for this system of an all-wise Creator the earth would lose its fertility, becoming exhausted and sterile.

Everything now finds its way back to the earth, and is broken down by bacteria, causing decay and conditions that make the material available again for the production of crops.

Bacteria are the connecting links between life and death, sustaining life by producing death.

B. P. Smoot, a lecturer for the Missouri state board of agriculture, summarizes the works of King, Hopkins, Hall and others on this subject:

"A plant grows, dies and falls back to earth. It has taken food from the air and soil. This plant food is locked up in the cells of the plant. Before it can be used again in the cycle of life it must be set free, or changed to another form.

"The bacteria bring about this change. They attack the remains of the plant and break them down into their elemental parts so the plant food there may be used again to grow more corn, wheat, oats or other plants. They link the world of the dead to the world of the living. Without them continued life on earth would soon be impossible.

"Soon dead animals and plants would accumulate on the face of the earth. Soon all the available plant food would be locked up in their dead bodies. These bacteria are the scavengers of the world and upon them depends our welfare."

Some Sarcasm.

Several Ohio lawyers once gathered in Judge Wilson's room after adjournment of court, and were discussing the retirement of a member of the bar. Among them was one whose practice was worth $25,000 a year. He said, "I have been practicing several years, and am well fixed. I have thought I would like to retire and devote my remaining years to studies I have neglected." "Study law," put in Judge Wilson.

PLENTY OF POTASH IN KELP

Pacific Coast's Beds Said to Contain Two Million Tons, Valued at $90,000,000.

The extent and value of the north Pacific kelp beds formed the basis of a lecture at the University of Washington by Prof. C. D. Rigg recently. The Bulletin of that university quotes Professor Rigg as saying that it is estimated there are two million tons of potash worth $45 a ton in the seaweed of the North Pacific ocean.

In his lecture Mr. Rigg credited Bosch of California with the discovery four years ago of the fact that kelp contained 25 per cent potash. Since then the federal bureau of soils has investigated the possibilities of potash production from this source and surveyed the beds. Germany has furnished most of the potash used in the United States, but that supply, of course, has been cut off since last August. Potash is used in the manufacture of explosives and of fertilizer.

No Head Dress.

A prominent New York business man, who declines the use of his name for reasons most obvious, is telling this one on his wife: On his return from a long tour of the West this business man's wife was narrating to him the delightful times she had while he was away.

"One night I was invited to a dinner party at a smart cafe," she said, "and one of the guests was the Turkish ambassador. He was well informed on every subject, and was one of the most entertaining dinner companions I ever knew."

"Did he wear a fez?" asked the husband.

"No, indeed!" she replied. "He was clean-shaven." — Saturday Evening Post.

The Proof.

"I can prove that like does not always produce like."

"Then do it."

"Are not loose methods generally sure to result in tight places?"

SEEING LIFE *with* JOHN HENRY

By George V. Hobart

John Henry and the Troupers

IF YOU'LL look real close you'll find Splashburg on a map of the middle West.

It's a railroad junction where careless travelers change cars and wait for the other train, which is always late.

A week ago I happened to be one of those careless travelers, marooned in Splashburg, and having a wicked hour or two to kill I strolled over to the Commercial House.

Steb Stephens is the name of the head clerk at the Commercial House in Splashburg. Steb has been throwing keys at the wall for a long time and he knows how to burn the beefers.

He played the Big Time once. Yes, years ago he was a bell hop at the old Willard in Washington and after that he jumped to Chicago as night porter at the old Sherman House; so what Step doesn't know about the hotel business isn't worth whimpering over.

Steb gave me a brief outline of his life's history and was just starting in to tell me about the battle of the Civil War in which his father was shot and who shot him when a feverish old party with Persian rug trimmings on the end of his chin squeezed up and began to let a peep out of him about the pie he had eaten for dinner.

"Calm yourself," said Smiling Steb, "and tell me where it bit you."

"Bit me! Bit me!" snarled the Old Party with the tapestry chinpiece. "Nothing of the kind, sir! I want you to know, sir, that your pie wasn't fit to eat, sir!"

"Cut it out!" suggested Steb.

"Cut it out, sir! How can I cut it out when I've eaten it, sir? It's an outrage, and I shall leave this hotel tomorrow," said Omar Khayyam.

"With the exception of $31.72, balance due, that will be about all from you," said Steb.

"I'll see the proprietor," said the Old Party, moving away with a face on him like four dollars in bad money.

"We get it good and plenty every day," said Steb, and just then something about six feet tall, wearing a slouch hat and a gilt mustache, fell against the counter, grabbed the register and buried a stub pen in its pages.

After looking over the result, I decided the stranger's first name must be Spider, because it loked like one on the register.

"Bath?" queried Steb.

"Only during a hot wave," said Spider.

"Going to be with us long?" inquired Steb.

"Say, Bub, you're wearing medals for asking questions, now ain't you?" answered Spider. "You just push me into a stall and lock the gate. I'm tired."

"Front! Show this gentleman to 49!" said Steb, sidestepping to avoid punishment.

Then Sweet William, the Boy Drummer, hopped into the ring for the next round.

Willie peddles pickles for the fun he gets out of it.

It is Willie's joy and delight to get a ginger-ale bun on and recite "Ostler Joe."

When trained down to 95 flat, Willie can get up and beat the clapper off "Curfew Shall Not Ring To-night."

"Any mail?" inquired Willie.

All the mail that Willie ever gets is a postal card from the pickle factory every two weeks asking him if the people along his route have all lost their appetites.

"No literature for you," Steb answered.

"Strange," said Willie, "my lady friends are very remiss, aren't they?"

"Yes; it looks like they were out to drop you behind the piano," said Steb.

Willie tore off a short rabbit laugh, and then inquired what time the next train left for New York.

The pickle factory expects Willie to make Pocomoke City, Squashtown Junction and Nubbinsville before next Sunday, so he tossed the train gag out just to show Steb that he knows there's a place called New York.

"At 7:45 over the D. L. & Q.," said Steb.

"What's next?" inquired Willie.

"At 8:10 over the H. B. & N.," Steb answered.

"Which gets there first?" Willie asked.

"The engineer," sighed Steb.

"Oh, you droll chap," said the pickle-pusher; "give me some toothpicks."

Then Sweet William went over to the big window, burrowed into a chair, stuck his feet up on the brass rail, ate toothpicks and thought he was IT.

When I got back to Steb he was dealing out the cards to a lady from Reading, Pa.

Her husband had been up in the air with a bum automobile, and when he came down he was several sections shy.

She was traveling for his health.

"My room is immediately over the kitchen," she informed Steb.

"The cook hasn't made a kick up to now," Steb went back at her.

She started a get-back, but her indignation choked her so she gave Steb the Society sting with both eyes and flounced out.

Steb bit the end off a penholder and said the rest internally.

Just then a couple of troupers trailed in.

They were with the "Bandit's Bride Co.," and the way had been long and weary.

"What have you got—double?" asked the villain of the piece.

"Two dollars and up!" said Steb.

"Nothing better?" inquired Low Comedy. He was making a crack, but nobody caught him.

"Four dollars, with bath." Steb suggested.

"Board?" asked the villain.

"Nothing but the sleeps and a fresh cake of soap," said Steb.

"Ring down!" Low Comedy put in. "Why, we lived a whole week in Pittsburg for less than that."

"You can turn the same trick here if you carry your own cake and sleep in the Park," said Steb.

"What's the name of this mint?" asked the villain.

Steb told him.

"To the towpath!" said Barrett Macready. "We're outside the life lines. We thought it was the Liverwurst Hotel, where they throw things at your appetite for $1 a day, double. To the left, wheel! Forward, march!"

I followed the two troupers out to the dinky barroom, because it looked about eight to one they'd pull a few wheezes and I'd get a few guffs.

"The woods for ours! Isn't this a bird of a place for a show to get stranded?" groaned the Low Comic, as he gave the Reub bartender the high sign, and the latter pushed forward two glasses and a black bottle.

"It wouldn't have been so bad if the show had gone to pieces in some burg where the people have insomnia in the daytime," the Juvenile growled. "But here, Mike, the men go to work in their pajamas, and the town hasn't any street cars because the conductor's bell sounds too much like an alarm clock, and it might wake the Mayor."

"I tell you, Mike," the Juvenile went on, "I'm too delicate for this one-night stand gag. I'm going to New York to build a theater."

"What with?" sneered Low Comedy.

"With a reporter I know on one of the papers," the Juvenile chuckled. "Say, what was the name of that town we played night before last?"

"Murphy's landing, wasn't it?" Mike answered.

"I guess that's right, because Murphy landed on me good and hard," the Juvenile said. "Remember those nice white doorknobs we ate for breakfast next morning? The waitress said they were hot biscuits, but I had to eat mine with a nut cracker. I've got it in my pantry yet, and every time I walk around the knob turns, and I can hear a door open somewhere."

Mike's double chin showed signs of agitation.

"Stranded here in this jay town!" The Juvenile grabbed the black bottle and upset it again. "Say, Mike, what we need is a guardian. And while we're at it let's pick out one with money so we can wire him for a little price to help us out on occasions like this. The next manager that wins me away from the stockyards will have to wear a gold-plated overcoat and stand in the wings every night where he can throw ten-dollar bills at me when I make my exit. No more slob impresarios for mine, with nothing in their inside pockets but a date book and a hearty appetite."

"Same here!" Low Comedy nodded. "The next manager that picks me out will have to drag me down to his bank and let me pick his coupons off the shelf before I'll sign."

"Bumped good and hard, here in the tall grass," the Juvenile complained again, "and not a cookie in the lunch-basket. Say! It has me winging, all right, and that's no idle hoot! This is the third troupe that blew out its mainspring for us this season, and I'm beginning to believe we ought to get vaccinated. How am I going to do Hamlet in New York this winter, I'd like to know? Eight weeks since we left Chicago, three shows to the bad, and still a thousand miles from the Great White Way. Say, Mike, at this rate it'll take about 629 shows to get us to Jersey City. Are you hep?"

Mike laughed. "It's the old story, my boy; we're a sad bunch of plowboys on this old farm of a world when we haven't a laittle mazuma in the vest pocket. I've got a new bit of recitation spiel I cooked up last night when I couldn't sleep. It's called "Knock and the World Knocks With You," and I'll put you jerry to it right now before it gets cold:

Knock, and the world knocks with you,
  Boost and you boost alone!
When you roast good and loud
You will find that the crowd
  Has a hammer as big as your own!

Buy, and the gang is with you;
  Reneg, and the game's all off;
For the lad with the thirst
Will see you first
  If you don't proceed to cough!

Be rich and the push will praise you,
  Be poor and they'll pass the ice,
You're a warm young guy
When you start to buy—
  You're a slob when you lose the price!

Be flush and your friends are many,
  Go broke and they'll say ta, ta!
While your bank account burns
You will get returns,
  When it's out you will get the ha!

Be gay and the mob will cheer you,
  They'll shout while your wealth endures;
Show a tearful lamp
And you'll see them tramp—
  And it's back to the woods for yours!

There's always a bunch to boost you
  While at your money they glance;
But you'll find them all gone
On that cold gray dawn
  When the fringe arrives on your pants!

"You've got the game of life sized to a showdown," was the Juvenile's comment.

At this point Jabe, the Reub bartender, pointed a freckled finger at

"Let a Peep Out of Him About the Pie He Had for Dinner."

Mike and butted in with: "Say, you be the fat cuss that cut up with that troupe at the Op'ry House last night, been't you?"

"No, I'm the skeleton man with a circus," Mike answered, and the bartender roared with delight.

"You don't look as how you took much exercise," snickered Jabe.

"But I do take exercise. Oh, me for that exercise thing, good and strong!" protested Mike.

"What kind of exercise do you take?" Jabe inquired.

"Well," Mike answered, "every morning I swing the clubs for fifteen minutes, then the dumbbells for ten minutes, then I run about three miles—and then I get up and eat my breakfast."

Jabe guffawed loudly over this bit of facetiousness.

"I was at the Op'ry House last night," Jabe informed them, "and I 'most laughed myself sick to the stomach at this yere fat cuss takin' off that Dutch policeman—ha, ha, ha, ha!" Jabe looked at the Juvenile. "You was putty good, too," he admitted, "takin' off that newspaper reporter and rescuin' the girl from the burnin' structyure, but you didn't do no funny fall and bust your galluses like this fat cuss—ha, ha, ha, ha!"

"Get him to unhook the laugh; he's a good steady listener," whispered the Juvenile, and Mike started in.

"Fine town this," Mike began. "All the modern improvements, eh? Cows wear nickel-plated bells, streets paved with grass, and the river has running water."

"Ha, ha, ha, ha!" Jabe roared.

"Reminds me of a place we struck out in Missouri last winter," Mike went on. "Same style of public architecture, especially the town pump. But the hotel there was the hit with us. It was called the Declaration of Independence because the proprietor had married an Englishwoman and wanted to be revenged. At supper time I ordered a steak, and they brought me a leather hinge covered with gravy, so I got up to add an amendment to the Declaration of Independence. The head waiter was an ex-pugilist, so he put the boots to me and covered my amendment with bruises. Then he made me eat the leather hinge, and for two weeks I felt like a garden gate and I used to slam every time the wind blew."

Jabe's laugh shook the building.

"The proprietor of that hotel was so patriotic," Mike continued, "that he wouldn't number the rooms like an ordinary hotel. Every room was named in honor of a President of the United States. That evening there happened to be a rush while I was standing near the desk, and I heard the clerk say: 'Front, show these gentlemen up to John Quincy Adams and tell the porter to take that trunk out of the alcove in Thomas Jefferson. Front, go and put down that window in Rutherford B. Hayes, and, here, take this whisky up to Abraham Lincoln. Front, what's all that racket in James Buchanan? Here, take these cigars to U. S. Grant, and turn off the gas in Teddy Roosevelt.' But I nearly fainted when he said, 'Front, run a sofa into James A. Garfield, and take this lady up to George Washington.'"

"Mortal Caesar! Ha, ha, ha, ha!" roared Jabe. "Daggone, if that ain't funny, you fat cuss!"

When I quit them to take my train Mike had worn finger marks on the side of the black bottle and Jabe had signed a verbal contract to go on the stage as the Juvenile's dresser.

All of which goes to prove that Splashburg isn't so bad provided you don't have to wait very long for a train out.

"Remember Those Nice White Doorknobs We Ate for Breakfast Next Morning?"